

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting
Wednesday, May 9, 2012
9:00 a.m.
Sacred Heart School, 1 Schuyler Avenue

Council Members Present:

Brennan, Karen	United Way of Western CT
Burke, Jennienne Peoples	Care to Care (Family Centers)
Feder, Karen	Abilis
Garcia, Maritza	Adult Learning Center
Hallisey, Jennifer	United Way of Western CT
Sabia, Michele	Stamford Public Schools
Rigano, Sue	Stamford Public Education Foundation
Wenz, Karen	First Presbyterian Nursery School

Advisors:

Ahuja, Sonja	Discovery Community Liaison, Graustein Memorial Fund
Cammarota, Karen	Grants Department, City of Stamford
Sargent, Carol	Childcare Learning Centers
Tarantino, Sherry	Sacred Heart School

Guests:

Bundy, Dorett	Home Center Director, Mead School
Pomerantz, Erica	Child FIRST, Child Guidance Center of Southern CT
Saavedra, Sandra	Child FIRST, Child Guidance Center of Southern CT

I. Welcome & Introductions

Jennienne Burke and Jennifer Hallisey, the School Readiness Council's interim chairs, welcomed everyone and thanked Sacred Heart for hosting today's meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes from April 2012 Meeting

The Council unanimously approved the minutes from the March meeting.

III. Announcements

Various Council members shared news of upcoming events:

- Care to Care will be having a home safety workshop for family home day care providers on May 22.
- The United Way has finally moved to its new offices on Summer Street! We'll soon host a meeting there.
- Carol Sargent, on behalf of CLC, thanked the School Readiness Council for purchasing a commemorative plaque that will be placed in front of a new planting at William Pitt in honor of a teacher who recently passed away.

- Congratulations to Karen Wenz on celebrating her 25th year with the First Presbyterian Nursery School.
- The first of two Play and Learn Nights will be held at the Ferguson Library on May 9. The registration for the event has been closed at 50.
- The Council will celebrate the Week of the Young Child with events throughout the week of May 14-19. An e-mail with details will be sent out shortly.
- The Early Childhood Fair is set for Saturday, May 19. Thanks to all those who have volunteered to help with pre-planning, setup, and clean up.

IV. New Business

- Dr. Erica Pomerantz, Program Director from Child FIRST gave an update on the grant. As the Committee knows, Stamford applied for and received a Child FIRST (Child and Family Interagency Resource, Support and Training) grant. By way of background, in March 2010 it was announced that a \$3.2 million grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation would go towards replicating the Child FIRST program in communities outside of Bridgeport. Child FIRST is a model program to decrease the incidence of serious emotional disturbance, developmental and learning problems, and abuse and neglect among high-risk young children. Child FIRST works with pediatricians, teachers, and other community providers to identify, assess, and intervene with vulnerable children and their families. Importantly, this grant will enable the Child Guidance Center to help families when children are infants (and in some cases help their parents before these children are born), thereby hopefully preventing the need for future services later on. The Child FIRST grant keeps with the Child Guidance philosophy that understanding behaviors are as important as changing behaviors. Erica was recently hired as the Program Director, along with two full time care coordinators. She will join the Committee going forward as a regular member.
- Jennienne Burke gave a brief overview of the Blueprint and described the plan for the June meeting. In brief:
 - Discovery began in Stamford in 2002 under the auspices of Childcare Learning Centers. It was primarily activity driven with small experiences such as “Learning in a Bag” and lunch and learn offerings.
 - Healthcare Connection became the lead Discovery initiative agency by providing money to providers in the form of mini grants to enhance the quality of their program as well as to fund community initiatives such as PLTI.
 - In 2006, Healthcare Connection merged with Family Centers. At the same time Discovery was shifting to a broader community Blueprint plan. Launched in 2006 the Stamford Early Childhood Blueprint was funded by a public-private partnership of state and Graustein funds.
 - In 2009 the SRC began implementation of the Blueprint strategies. A long standing challenge for the SRC has been to convey that the School Readiness Council and the Discovery Collaborative are one in the same in the Stamford community.

The challenge for the Council going forward remains sustainability. At our June meeting, we’ll continue our strategic planning discussions around infrastructure and sustainability.

- Sonja Ahuja shared with the Council a community resource guide that the Graustein Memorial Fund created explicitly for promoting the participation of parents at every level of decision-making, within the home as well as the organizations and networks that touch the lives of young children. It features a honeycomb visual which was chosen to visually represent how the components of a community-wide strategy can support parents as agents of change who can come together and become a “system.” The full document will be sent to the Council in advance of the next meeting.

V. Old Business

- There was no old business.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

**The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 13
at the William Pitt Child Development Center, 195 Hillandale Avenue.**

Addendum A: Sacred Heart Report, April 2012

Program Utilization:

- School Day – School Year – 50 Students
- Pre – K 3 Class – 18
- Pre – K 4 Class #1-16
- Pre – K 4 Class #2-16
- All 20 School Readiness slots are full.

Program Attendance:

- Children – 98% Colds, coughs, allergies
- Staff – 98% Colds

Staffing:

- No changes during the month of March 2012.

Activities & Events:

- We held our annual Dr. Seuss Day on 3/2! We would like to thank the many parents that have sent in Dr. Seuss books to share and read with their classmates. The teachers read many of the Dr. Seuss classic stories in their classrooms.
- The Scholastic Book Fair was a success!! Our profit came by selecting books amounting to \$328.30 in Scholastic \$\$\$. Each year we continue to build our school library!!
- Our school Photo Day on 3/22 went off without a problem!! The photographer was able to win over every child and get them to smile and pose for their photos! We should have delivery of all photos on or around April 12th.
- Our staff members had Staff Development & Training on 3/23, on the State of CT mandated Lesson Plans which are now called (LEP's) Learning Experience Plans. The SHS staff devised a new format for the LEP's to help make the planning much less time consuming.
- Sacred Heart School has completed Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Planning for Child Care Centers at Norwalk Community College.

Addendum B: Childcare Learning Centers Report, April 2012

- Program Utilization
 - a. Authorized Capacity – Full Day – 334; Part Day – 97; Extended Day – 113 = 544
 - b. Ages: 3 year olds – 110; 4 year olds – 335; 5 year olds - 99
 - c. Children with disabilities = 19 with IEP
2 without IEP
 - d. Notes and Trends: N/A
- Program Attendance:
 - a. 99% Attendance.
 - b. Notes and trends: - none
- Staffing
 - a. Open Positions – 1Teacher- Cluster B
 - b. Recruitment – ad on-line, local newspapers, postings at NCC
 - c. Training:
 - Bi-weekly meetings occurring on NAEYC Standards – March 1st and 15th.
 - Instructional Coordinators meet weekly with each classroom to review Learning Experience Plans
 - March 16th – Staff Development Day – Classroom Portfolios, Diversity Luncheon-Sharing Cultures, Julie Coakley Presented- Observation/Assessment
- Special Events/Activities:
 - Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children.
 - Pitney Bowes volunteers came to distribute the materials they purchased to assist in meeting the NAEYC criteria on March 27th. Pitney Bowes purchased Life Cycle Kits, multicultural dolls, multicultural dress up clothes, and career puzzles for each classroom. Nine volunteers came to distribute and read to the children.
 - Cluster A celebrated Career Week with Dentist, Nurse and Chef visits and Yoga on March 13th
 - Parent Advisory Committee meeting occurred on March 20th.
 - Student Support Team is meeting bi-weekly to discuss any children with concerns.
 - “Read Across America” was celebrated February 27-March 2nd- Focused on Dr. Seuss books with many fun activities all week, including a special Green Egg snack
 - Cat in the Hat came to visit on March 2nd. All children were able to enjoy a special reading of “Cat in the Hat” by Dr. Seuss.
 - Mobile Dental Unit was at William Pitt on March 5th, 6th, and 7th.
 - Director, Instructional Coordinators and Cluster Manager were able to go to the Ferguson Library and view recommended children’s books. We have received a grant from William Pitt Foundation for new books for the children.

- Farmer's Market occurred March 14th- Parents and staff were invited to pick out two fruit/vegetables for free. They were asked to complete a survey explaining how they prepared the items and anyone who completed the survey will be invited to come back next month for additional fruit/vegetables.
- Lunch and Learn – “Positive Parenting-Identifying Your Parenting Style”- presented by Olympia Arnold – March 8th
- Cluster B – field trip to Stamford High Preschool Lab-March 23rd and 30th.
- Cluster C – field trip to Stamford High Preschool Lab – March 20th.
- All Clusters have been taking the Kindergarten bound children on the Ferguson Libraries “Purple Bus” trips throughout the month.
- Notes and trends- N/A